

IN THE CLAIMS

Please add the following new claim.

a' 41. (New) An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said etched sticks are formed from a wafer having a wafer thickness direction and wherein said optical fiber extends in a direction parallel with said wafer thickness direction.

Please amend claim 20 hereby presented in clean form pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.121 (c) (1) (i). Another version of the amended claim, marked up to show all the changes relative to the previous version of each respective claim, is provided separate from this amendment pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.121 (c) (1) (ii). (See Appendix I).

20. (Amended) An apparatus for aligning optical fibers in a 2-dimensional array, comprising:

a' a) a plurality of etched sticks each having a notch and a front surface, wherein the etched sticks are stacked so that the notch forms a cage;

b) an optical fiber disposed in the cage and oriented perpendicular to the front surface; wherein the etched sticks have top and bottom surfaces, and the top and bottom surfaces are cleaved surfaces; and

wherein said sticks are etched from a wafer having a wafer thickness direction such that said wafer thickness direction is parallel to said optical fiber disposed in said cage.